

OLD-TIME TOBACCO SHOPS.

CHARACTERISTICS THAT DO NOT MARK PRESENT-DAY MARTS.

THE STORES OF THE FIFTIES TOOK THE PLACE OF CLUBS FOR MANY—MIXING TOBACCO OVER THE COUNTER.

What has become of the old-time tobacco shops?

The question is often asked by people who can remember things that took place "away back in the fifties," but the younger generation never saw the institution, and the tobacco shop of the days of their grandfathers is not known even by picture or description. It was gradually but steadily crowded out of existence until to-day it has become a dim recollection. There are a few places still in existence in New-York which are known as old-time tobacco shops, but they have no real claim to the title. The places are old enough to merit the name, but with age they became transformed. The old fixtures have been replaced by modern counters, shelves and cases, the stock of goods had to be "up to date" to insure a continuance of the old patrons' goodwill, and little by little the old stores have become new, until the antique picture vanished entirely and only the frame was left.

The tobacco shop of the old days was the meeting place for congenial spirits as well as the headquarters for pipes, tobacco and snuff, and in some localities for cigars. There were tobacco stores in New-York where the regular patrons were professional men, where scientific questions were discussed, and there were shops where the customers belonged to the lower strata of society. The volunteer firemen had their favorite shops, the petty politicians, the merchants, large and small, and even church factions had their particular tobacco shop where many informal meetings were held. The Indian sign was in general use, and while little shops were content with a miniature brave or squaw, the more pretentious places had life-size figures. Some of the shops where the majority of customers belonged to a certain class disregarded the unwritten law as to the Indian sign and had sailors, firemen or soldiers made of wood and painted in bright colors in front of their places of business. A figure made to represent Lord Raleigh with a bunch of tobacco in one hand and a pipe in the other was for many years the sign in front of an East Broadway place, and figures of Columbus, Punch, Pocahontas and clowns of all kinds were scattered liberally among the legitimate Indian tobacco signs.

PLANNED IN THE SHOPS.

Excursions, dances, parties, fights and political movements were planned in the tobacco shops. Chairs and benches were necessary articles of furniture, and many customers came and spent only time, except when their tobacco pouches needed replenishing. Then the proprietor would make a mixture for his customer with the care of an apothecary compounding a prescription. He knew the peculiarities of his various patrons, and if he was of the popular class he had a mixture to suit any taste. The tobacco came in barrels and casks, in plugs and twists. Every smoker had an idea that his particular combination was the best. In the back rooms of many of the early tobacco shops there were small tables where the patrons played dominos and cards, and in many respects these places of business took the place of clubs. The pipe played an important part in the lives of many men in those days, and the habitual smoker clung to his tobacco man no matter where he went, because he alone could make the particular pipe mixture which just suited his taste.

There were many shops kept by men who could make cigars, where part of the place was devoted to cigarmaking, and customers would buy their daily quota of cigars "direct from the bench," and when the proprietor received a new batch of tobacco or when he had hit upon a happy combination of filler, binder and wrapper his patrons would receive the benefit of it, and discussions as to the merits of the various tobaccos would follow.

THE WAR BROKE IT UP.

"The war broke up the old tobacco shop," said an old man, "just as it did slavery. The war brought a tax on tobacco and cigars, and the tax stopped selling from the bench and mixing over the counter. Some of the lower class shops became pelley shops, some degenerated into saloons, but the better class of these places of business was succeeded by the cigar store of to-day, which is no more like the old-time article than a Fifth-ave. hotel is like a New-England tavern. The absence of chairs and benches shows that the social part of the business has been dropped and only the mercantile end remains."

The smoking mixtures which made the various places popular have outlived the shops, and many of the popular brands of to-day had their origin before the war. A large manufacturer whose father started the business "in the fifties" tells of the many notable New-Yorkers who used to come to the shop for their particular mixture. The Stamp act compelled the dealer to put the tobacco up in packages, and the smoker missed the pleasure of seeing the mixture made, but had to accept it in its new stamped cover. The same was true of the men and women who knew just where the pot or bladder was kept from which their daily quota of snuff was weighed out to them. They also had to buy their snuff in packages, and then the label began to play an important part, and for some time catchy

names and fine pictures were important factors in the sale of manufactured tobacco.

There was a place in Grand-st. where an old teacher of languages was the star figure. He had been a soldier in the French army and wore a decoration on his shabby-genteel coat. Every evening saw him in the little tobacco shop, where a special chair was reserved for him, no matter how many customers had to stand. He smoked a mixture of Turkish and Virginia tobacco which was known to the patrons of the place as "The Professor's smoke," and when any one called for it the old man considered it a personal compliment. This mixture was put up in packages and had a large sale, and is still on the market under various names.

INFLUENCE OF THE NAME.

At the present time, style of packing, label and name play important parts in the sale of smoking mixtures. It would be impossible to sell a package of tobacco branded "Hard-a-port" in a mining district, and "Farmer's Delight" if ever so good, would be a dead letter in a Wall-st. cigar store. There are thousands of brands of tobacco on the market, and large concerns are compelled to keep great stocks because certain classes or parties favor particular names or brands regardless of the quality of the tobacco. This fact has

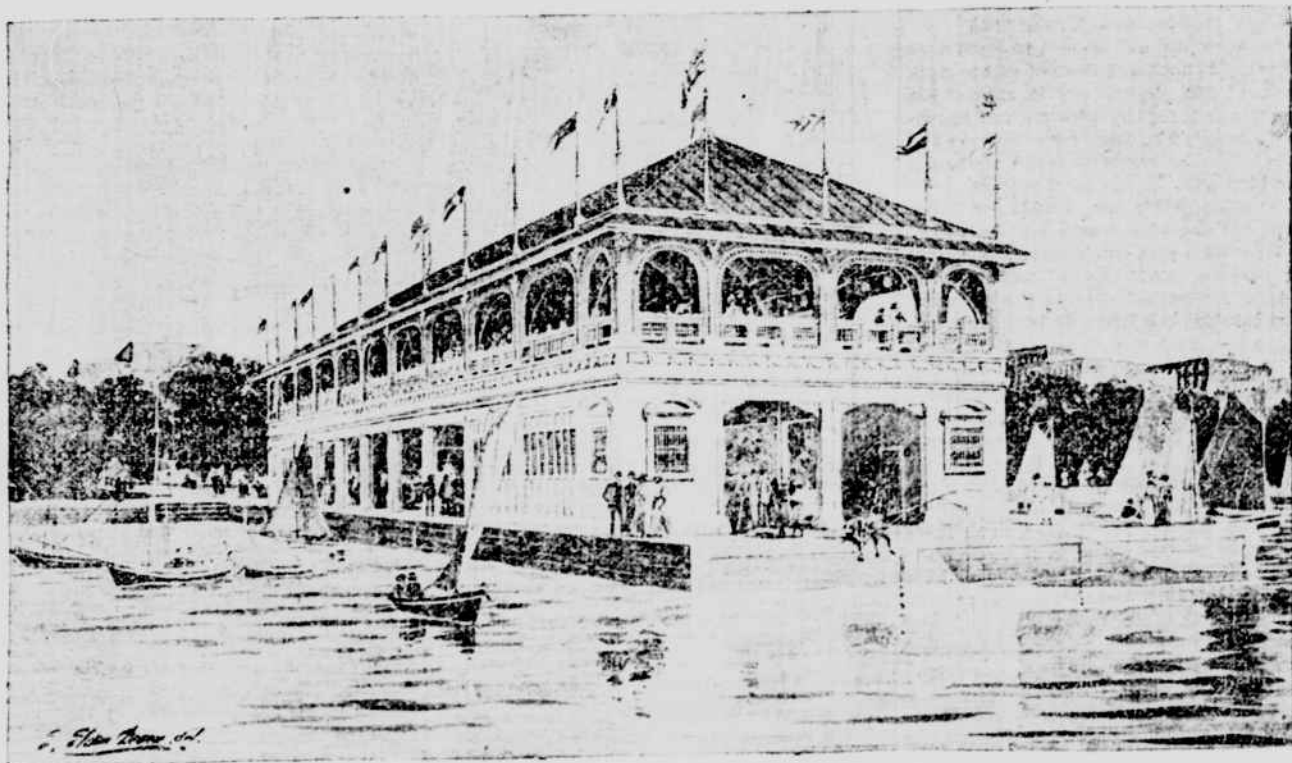
commodation and treatment and the consequent enhanced appreciation of the benefits of being an inmate of a hospital. This state of affairs applies also to this country. The accumulation of chronic cases is another fruitful cause of increase, and it must not be overlooked that the accumulation of chronic cases is inevitable at a hospital for the insane as differing from a general hospital, because at any insane asylum all the incurables, or nearly all, have to be kept as permanent patients. Under the modern system, too, the rate of mortality is very much less.

When all that is to be said has been said to minimize as much as possible this increase, it is useless to pretend that there has been no real increase whatever. It is certainly not so great as statistics without necessary explanations and the alarmists would lead us to suppose; still the fact that there is some increase is more or less self-evident.

THE RECREATION PIERS.

PLANS OF THE DOCK BOARD FOR INCREASING THE NUMBER.

So successful has the "recreation-pier" idea been that the Dock Commissioners are pushing the plans of those already projected, and the contracts of at least three more will be given out in the course of the winter in order that their construction may be begun in the early spring. Possibly, also, the details of still another, the



RECREATION PIER TO BE BUILT AT EAST ONE-HUNDRED-AND-TWELFTH-ST.

been a boon to manufacturers who give the same mixture several names and put it up in various forms. The names, style of packing and mode of decorating package tobacco change continually, and the great improvement may be seen by comparing a package of "Garibaldi," "Little Mac," "True Blue" or "Volunteer" of thirty-five years ago with the present packages of tobacco, put up in burnished or lacquered tin boxes and ornamented with artistic designs. Colleges, clubs, trades and professions have been bribed into the use of certain tobaccos by manufacturers who knew that there was much in a name, and all people have not yet been reached, which may be seen by the growing list of tobacco mixtures.

IS INSANITY INCREASING?

From The New-York Medical Record.

Public opinion has decided that this is a neurotic age, and that insanity is ever on the increase. This general impression, however, appears to be erroneous, and the trouble is probably more relative than actual. Yet that there is an increase can hardly be denied. A hot and bitter discussion has been prevailing on the subject for many years in Great Britain, and still continues with undiminished vigor. The lunacy departments there hold that the increase is only apparent, while those taking the opposite view contend that the increase is only too real.

Regarding the question from a statistical point of view alone, the conclusion arrived at by most persons would be that the latter are right, but, as an old-time Glasgow professor was in the habit of telling his classes, "Statistics are like sausages. It all depends on the old woman who makes them." In "The Westminster Review" for May is a slashing article attacking the arguments of the Lunacy Commissioners which they bring forward in support of their contention that the increase is only apparent. The writer of this article says that there is a real, substantial and progressive increase, and backs up his words with figures. In 1862 in England there were 2,02 lunatics in every 10,000 of population; in 1895 there were 3.15. In 1862 in Scotland there were 2.01 lunatics in every 10,000 of the population; in 1895 there were 3.39.

Figures so startling as these will take a great deal of explaining away, but to a large extent they are misleading. Statistics in lunacy must be dealt with very broadly and cautiously. One reason for the great increase in the population of hospitals for the insane is the fact that lunatics are looked upon with different eyes than formerly. In the early part of the century insanity was regarded with horror or scorn, and with little feeling of pity or sympathy. The truth that it was a disease possible to cure had not entered men's minds. An asylum was a prison, the inmates of which were treated more harshly than criminals; now that asylums are recognized as hospitals, they contain inmates who formerly were not counted as lunatics. The advance in England in the number of the insane has been almost wholly in the pauper class, and is doubtless due to the improved ac-

sixth of the set, will be arranged for at that time. In any event, it is likely that a year from now four recreation piers will be in active use and possibly five or six.

President O'Brien of the Dock Board is taking a keen personal interest in getting these completed and ready for the people of the far East and West sides of the city. It was intended to have the new East Twenty-fourth-st. pier thrown open to the public on Labor Day, but a strike has delayed the work, and it will be September 18 now (supposing that no more labor troubles come) before this can be put in readiness. The Twenty-fourth-st. pier is to be the largest and most costly of all. It will measure 722 feet long by 100 wide. In style it will be French Renaissance, and its total cost is figured at \$250,000, of which sum \$100,000 will have been spent on the building alone before the work is completed.

The other recreation piers arranged for are at the foot of East One-hundred-and-twelfth-st. for the denizens of "Little Italy" up in that part of Harlem; at the foot of Christopher-st., North River, the plans for which have already been approved; at the foot of West Fifth-st., which is the pier that will probably be arranged for a winter garden, and probably at West One-hundred-and-twenty-ninth-st. This latter has been proposed and the location is thought well of, but it has not been definitely decided upon.

One point of interest regarding these water pleasure grounds is that various schools of architecture will be drawn upon in their construction. Thus the Twenty-fourth-st. pier is French Renaissance; the Third-st. pier is of the same type of building, but the other three now planned vary. The "Little Italy" pier is to be North Italian, and out of compliment to the people who will use it most the Dock Commissioners have had it designed by an Italian architect. The Christopher-st. pier will be Roman, or of the south of Italy, in design, and it is planned to have the East Fifth-st. pier Colonial.

TRICKS WITH LIQUID AIR.

From a Lynn (Mass.) newspaper.

A small party of prominent electricians, among whom were Professor Elhu Thomson, John W. Gibney and Walter C. Fish, of Lynn, with Edwin W. Rice, Jr., formerly superintendent of the Thomson-Houston Electric Company of this city, but now technical director of the General Electric Company at Schenectady, N. Y., and a few outsiders, sat down to a quiet supper in the private dining-room of Earl & Martin's restaurant on Union-st., when some of the wits in the party amused themselves by playing tricks on the table attendants, and also on the astute cook, William J. Bond, by freezing some of the dishes

solid as soon as the latter were put on the table. In fact, to such an extent did one member of the party carry his merriment that he sent back a slice of bread, solidly congealed, to the cook, when an interrogation as to why such food was put upon the table, "Billy" was naturally puzzled at the occurrence, and all the more so when he too examined the bread complained of, and found it crumbled to dust at his touch. He could not solve the enigma, and was still further puzzled when a glass of liquid was returned, also frozen solid. One of the electricians gave the secret away after the supper, and explained that the substances were frozen by means of liquid air, of which one of the party had a supply.

A DANGEROUS CHARACTER.

A SUMMER GIRL WARNS ANOTHER AGAINST A MAN TO BE AVOIDED.

From The Chicago Post.

"As sure as you live there's another man!" cried the girl in white delightedly, as a man with a valise came up the steps of the summer resort hotel.

The girl in the yachting suit looked at him intently for a minute and then shook her head earnestly.

"Don't go near him!" she exclaimed. "Don't let any one introduce him to you under any circumstances! Don't have anything to do with him at all!"

"But there are thirty-eight girls and only five other men in the hotel," protested the girl in

white. "We can't afford to be too particular." "Well, you can't afford to have anything to do with him," persisted the girl in the yachting suit.

"What do you know about him?"

"I know all about him. I met him in the mountains last summer, and I tell you he's dangerous."

"Dangerous?" exclaimed the girl in white scornfully. "He looks about as harmless as any one I ever saw."

"Well, he isn't," asserted the one in the yachting suit. "He's dangerous, and in addition to that he's the biggest fool that ever put on a flannel tennis suit and went to the seashore."

"One of the kind that rocks the boat?"

"Worse than that. He can't tell a summer flirtation from a case of genuine love."

"Really?"

"Yes, indeed. That's what makes him dangerous. Why, what do you think he wanted to do last year?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"He wanted to hold me to a summer resort engagement, actually wanted me to marry him just because I said I would one moonlight night up in the mountains, and couldn't understand it when I refused to recognize him after we got back to the city. Oh, he isn't a safe man to have anything to do with. He lacks experience."

The girl in white turned away with a sigh.

"It seems too bad to let any kind of a man escape," she said. "But, of course, a man who is absurd enough to look upon a summer resort engagement seriously might be very troublesome."

CHIVALRY ON THE FIELD.

From The Chicago Times-Herald.

There are many of these tales, and some of them are very beautiful. A man who had been a private in an Illinois cavalry regiment told me once of an incident of the battle of Jonesboro. He and his comrades had been dismounted in the edge of thick woods, and dismounted cavalry are the hardest of troops to rout. In front of them was an open cornfield, a quarter of a mile wide, with woods upon its further side. Reinforced by a half-dozen companies of infantry, possibly fifteen hundred Federals lay perdu. In blunder, a company of Confederates, not more than ninety men all told, was ordered to attack. With a yell the handful swept out of the opposite woods and charged across the field. At a distance of one hundred yards a single volley disposed of them. Those that were left on their feet wheeled and scampered back to their position.

One, however, remained. He was the captain in command and had been far in advance of his men. When he found himself deserted he stopped and folded his arms. Sixty yards away, alone in the wide field, the summer sun pouring down upon the silver gray of his uniform, he stared stanchly into the eyes of fifteen hundred Federals. He was only a beardless boy, and the newness of his clothing showed that he was but a few days from home. All down the long line of Federals ran a cry: "Don't shoot him! Don't shoot him!" He gave the military salute and marched steadily back to his men. Not a gun was fired.